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70. (New) The local area network as in claim 69, wherein said power/data splitter/combiner comprises an AC power/data splitter/combiner.

71. (New) The local area network as in claim 70, wherein said power/data splitter/combiner comprises a DC power/data splitter/combiner.

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified patent application in view of the amendments above and the remarks following is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-3 and 5-59 are in this case. Claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-17, 19-22, 27, 28, 31, 35-40, 42-44, 46, 47, 52, 57 and 59 have been rejected under § 102(b). Claims 18, 45, 56 and 58 have been rejected under § 103(a). Claims 11, 23-26, 29, 30, 32-34, 41 and 48-51 have been objected to. Claims 53-55 have been allowed. Claims 10, 11, 35-39, 41-46, 48, 52, 58 and 59 have been canceled. Independent claims 1, 40 and 47 have been amended. New independent claims 60, 61, 64, 66, 67 and 69 and new dependent claims 62, 63, 65, 68, 70 and 71 have been added.

The claims before the Examiner are directed toward a local area network based on serial intelligent cells (SICs) that are connected in a pairwise manner only by electrically-conducting media to form communicating pairs. The two SICs of each pair communicate with each other, bidirectionally and independent of any other pair, exclusively via the respective electrically-conducting media. In various embodiments, the electrically-conducting media include electrical power wiring or telephone wiring of a building; at least one of the media is used for both data exchange and either electrical power delivery, analog telephony or digital telephony; at least one of the

SICs is powered from an electrical power main , from a dedicated power line, or from the electrically-conducting media of its respective pair, or can itself deliver electrical power; or at least one of the pairs is partly housed within an electrical outlet. In other embodiments, one of the SICs includes a sensor or an actuator; one of the SICs is connected to a public telephone network interface; or the local area network functions as a multiplexer.

§ 102(b) Rejections - Markkula, Jr., et al. '690

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3, 5-10, 12-17, 19-22, 27, 28, 31, 35-40, 42-44, 46, 47, 52, 57 and 59 under § 102(b) as being anticipated by Markkula, Jr., et al., U. S. Patent No. 4,918,690 (henceforth, "Markkula, Jr., et al. '690"). The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 10, 35-39, 42-44, 46, 52 and 59 have been canceled, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

As discussed below, claim 1 has been placed in condition for allowance by the inclusion therein of the limitations of claims 10 and 11; claim 40 has been placed in condition for allowance by the inclusion therein of the limitations of claim 41; and claim 47 has been placed in condition for allowance by the inclusion therein of the limitations of claim 48. It follows that claims 2, 3, 5-9, 12-17, 19-22, 27, 28, 31 and 57, that depend from claim 1, also are allowable.

§ 103(a) Rejections - Markkula, Jr., et al. '690

The Examiner has rejected claims 18, 45, 56 and 58 under § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Markkula, Jr., et al. '690. The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claims 45 and 58 have been canceled, thereby rendering moot the Examiner's rejection of these claims.

As discussed below, claim 1 has been placed in condition for allowance by the inclusion therein of the limitations of claims 10 and 11. It follows that claims 18 and 56, that depend from claim 1, also are allowable.

Objections

The Examiner has objected to claims 11, 23-26, 29, 30, 32-34, 41 and 48-51 as being based on rejected base claims. The Examiner has noted that claims 11, 18, 23-26, 29, 30, 32-34, 41 and 48-51 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claim.

Claim 1 now has been amended to include the limitations of claims 10 and 11. Correspondingly, claims 10 and 11 has been canceled.

New claim 60 is claim 1 including the limitations of claims 22 and 23. New claim 61 is claim 1 including the limitations of claims 22 and 24. New claim 62 corresponds to claim 25. New claim 63 corresponds to claim 26. New claim 64 is claim 1 including the limitations of claims 21 and 29. New claim 65 corresponds to claim 30. New claim 66 is claim 1 including the limitations of claims 1, 21, 31 and 32. New claim 67 is claim 1 including the limitations of claim 33. New claim 68 corresponds to claim 34.

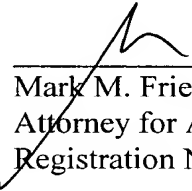
Claim 40 now has been amended to include therein the limitations of claim 41. Correspondingly, claim 41 has been canceled.

Claim 47 has been amended to include therein the limitations of claim 48. Correspondingly, claim 48 has been canceled.

New claim 69 is claim 47 including the limitations of claim 49. New claim 70 corresponds to claim 50. New claim 71 corresponds to claim 51.

In view of the above amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1, 40, 47, 53, 54, 59-61, 64, 66, 67 and 69, and hence dependent claims 2, 3, 5-34, 49-51, 55-57, 62, 63, 65, 68, 70 and 71 are in condition for allowance. Prompt notice of allowance is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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